Numb. CXLVIII.

The GUARDIAN.

——— Fas est & ab Hoste doceri.

Monday, August 31. 1713.

THERE is a kind of Apothegm, which I have frequently met with in my Reading, to this purpose; *That there are few, if any Books, out of which a Man of Learning may not extract something for his use.* I have often experienced the Truth of this Maxim, when, calling in at my Bookseller's, I have taken the Book next to my Hand off the Counter, to employ the Minutes I have been obliged to linger away there, in waiting for one Friend or other. Yesterday, when I came there, the *Turkish Tales* happened to lie in my way; upon opening of that amusing Author, I happened to dip upon a short Tale, which gave me a great many serious Reflections. The very same Fable may fall into the Hands of a great many Men of Wit and Pleasure, who, 'tis probable, will read it with a Sneer; but since it may as probably Divert and Instruct a great many Persons of plain and virtuous Minds, I shall make no scruple of making it the Entertainment of this Day's Paper. The Moral to be drawn from it is intirely Christian, and is so very obvious, that I shall leave to every Reader the Pleasure of picking it out for himself.

The History of Santon Barsisa.

THere was formerly a *Santon* whose Name was *Barsisa*, which for the Space of an hundred Years very fervently apply'd himself to Prayer; and scarce ever went out of the Grotto in which he made his Residence, for fear of exposing himself to the Danger of offending God. He fasted in the Day-time, and watch'd in the Night; all the Inhabitants of the Country had such a great Veneration for him, and so highly valu'd his Prayers, that they commonly apply'd to him when they had any Favour to beg of Heaven. When he made Vows for the Health of a sick Person, the Patient was immediately cur'd.

It happen'd that the Daughter of the King of that Country fell into a dangerous Distemper, the Cause of which the Physicians could not discover, yet they continu'd prescribing Remedies but to no purpose, but instead of helping the Princess, they only augmented her Disease. In the mean time the King was inconsolable, for he passionately lov'd his Daughter; wherefore one Day, finding all Human Assistance vain, he declar'd it as his Opinion, that the Princess ought to be sent to the *Santon Barsisa*.

All the *Beys* applauded his Sentiments, and the King's Officers conducted her to the *Santon*; who, notwithstanding his frozen Age, could not behold a Beauty without being sensibly mov'd. He gaz'd on her with Pleasure; and the Devil taking this Opportunity, whisper'd in his Ear these Words; *O Santon! don't let slip such a fortunate Minute: Tell the King's Servants that it is requisite for the Princess to lye this Night in the Grotto, to see whether it will please God to cure her; that you will put up a Prayer for her, and that they need only come to fetch her to Morrow.*

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